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Second Committee

Summary record of the 2nd meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 20 September 2000, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Niculescu ..... (Romania)

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00-65029 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Election of officers

1. **The Chairman** announced that the Group of Western European and other States and the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States had nominated, respectively, Ms. Barrington (Ireland) and Mr. Escanero (Mexico) for the office of Vice-Chairman. The election of the third Vice-Chairman and the Rapporteur would be postponed.

2. *Ms. Barrington (Ireland) and Mr. Escanero (Mexico) were elected Vice-Chairmen by acclamation.*

Organization of work (A/55/250 and Corr.1; A/C.2/55/L.1)

3. **The Chairman** said that meetings would begin punctually at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. If a speaker was absent, his or her delegation would automatically be placed last on the list of speakers for that meeting.

4. At the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly, the Second Committee had utilized only 70 per cent of its allocated conference resources and had lost 64 hours and 20 minutes owing to late starting and early adjournment of meetings. He hoped that, at the current session, the Committee would be able to improve on those statistics.

5. Based on previous experience, it was proposed that speakers should be limited to 15 minutes for the general debate and 7 minutes for statements under individual agenda items. Introductions by members of the Secretariat and representatives of the agencies, funds and programmes would be limited to 10 minutes. Their statements should focus on highlights and priorities and should, if possible, be distributed in advance.

6. The Committee's agenda was based on clusters as laid down in General Assembly resolutions 52/12 B, 50/227 and 48/162. The programme of work took into account the availability of reports and, to the extent possible, the presence of the high-level representatives of the Secretariat, agencies, funds and programmes.

7. As indicated in resolution 50/227, the Bureau would meet with the Bureau of the Third Committee to review the respective programmes of work, identify potential areas of overlap and make recommendations to the Committee.

8. As requested in resolution 50/227, draft resolutions would be shorter. For issues of a procedural nature, decisions would be used instead of resolutions. The Bureau would look into the possibility of dealing with related items in omnibus or combined resolutions. Also, in accordance with resolution 50/227, the Committee would, at the end of the session, review its draft programme for the coming year with a view to streamlining and simplifying reporting procedures. The deadlines for the submission of draft resolutions would be strictly adhered to.

9. He intended to organize briefings by senior officials, panel discussions on agenda items and keynote addresses. He would also welcome any suggestions from members of the Committee.

10. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the arrangements just described were acceptable to the Committee.

11. *It was so decided.*

12. **The Chairman** drew attention to document A/C.2/55/L.1 and to the actions taken by the General Assembly based on the recommendations contained in the first report of the General Committee (A/55/250 and Corr.1) relating to the organization of the work of the General Assembly and the Main Committees. The target date for the conclusion of the Committee's work was Friday, 1 December 2000.

13. **Ms. Kelley** (Secretary of the Committee) announced changes in the programme of work. The report on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (agenda item 95 (g)), scheduled for 19 and 20 October, would be taken up on 31 October, since the original dates coincided with a workshop to be held on that topic in India. Agenda item 97 on training and research would be rescheduled to the afternoon of 9 November.

14. **Mr. Sorcar** (Bangladesh) suggested that the report of the Secretary-General on the state of preparations for the third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (agenda item 102), should, in order to benefit from input from high-level representatives of the Trade and Development Board, be moved back to the afternoon of 27 October, when the Committee would be considering the report of the Trade and Development Board on its twenty-third executive session (agenda item 92 (a)). The other sub-

items under agenda item 92 could be rescheduled for that morning.

15. **Mr. Ashe** (Antigua and Barbuda), speaking as Chairman of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, fully supported the Secretariat's proposal to postpone consideration of agenda item 95 (g) until 31 October. By rescheduling the item, the Committee's deliberations would be informed by informal consultations to be held in India, Rome and Geneva prior to that time.

16. **Mr. Le Gargasson** (France), speaking on behalf of the European Union, requested clarification as to whether the items making up each cluster would be dealt with together or sequentially.

17. **Ms. Kelley** (Secretary of the Committee) said that each cluster would be considered as a unit. Delegations could speak to one, two or all of the items in each cluster but could deliver only one statement on it.

18. **Mr. Gamaleldin** (Egypt) said that every effort should be made to avoid the late issuance of documentation, which had delayed the Committee's work in previous years.

19. **Mr. Gálvez** (Chile) said that, in some cases, the reason for grouping particular items for consideration as a cluster was not apparent, and he would like to know the basis on which the clusters of items had been formed. He hoped that flexibility would be shown in cases where the link between items was not clear.

20. **The Chairman** said that the items had been clustered in response to General Assembly resolutions 50/227 and 52/12 B, but of course, flexibility would be shown in their consideration.

21. **Mr. Stanislavov** (Russian Federation) said that the Committee would be involved in discussions on the organization of the high-level meeting on financing for development and the follow-up to the Rio Conference. Those two important meetings, along with a special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS, a conference on the least developed countries and a follow-up to the World Summit for Children, among others, were to take place before the end of 2002. His delegation was of the view that the timing of those important events should be considered carefully, in order to avoid overburdening both delegations and the Secretariat.

22. **Mr. Rahmtalla** (Sudan) drew attention to an error in the Arabic version of A/C.2/55/L.1, which listed the date for completion of the Committee's work as 7 November.

23. **The Chairman** said that the appropriate corrigendum would be issued.

Other matters

24. **The Chairman** informed members that the Secretary of the Trade and Development Board in Geneva had approached him with the suggestion that the two bodies should hold a joint meeting through video conferencing on the morning of 16 October on the theme of regional integration. He would welcome views on the suggestion and on other possible themes of interest to members.

25. **Mr. Osio** (Nigeria), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that financing for development, or regional integration as seen in that context, might be an interesting topic for such a meeting.

26. **Mr. Le Gargasson** (France), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that the conference on the least developed countries would be another useful subject for joint discussion.

The meeting rose at 4.35 p.m.